

7. (Three Times Amended) A process to make a highly-neutralized, melt-processable ethylene copolymer comprising the steps of

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D27
- (a) Melt-blending an ethylene α,β ethylenically unsaturated carboxylic acid copolymer or a melt processable ionomer thereof with an organic acid or salt of an organic acid, and
 - (b) Concurrently or subsequently adding sufficient cation source to neutralize about 100% of the acid moieties of the acid copolymer or ionomer thereof and the organic acid or salt thereof;

Wherein the amount of cation source added in step (b) to neutralize about 100% of the acid moieties is in excess of the amount that is required to neutralize all of the acid moieties in the acid copolymer or ionomer thereof and the organic acid or salt.

C3

10. (Amended) A thermoplastic melt-processable composition formed according to the process of claim 7, wherein said organic acid or salt of an organic acid is present at 20 to 45 weight percent.

REMARKS

The amendments to Claim 1 and 10 are intended to further distinguish the subject matter sought to be patented from the prior art references used to reject claims. Basis for this amendment can be found in the Table 1 on page 7 of the specification as originally filed and in the Examples. As such it is felt that the amendment does not constitute the introduction of new matter. The amendment to Claim 7 is intended to repeat a previous portion of the claim for clarity and as such is not felt to constitute the introduction of new matter. Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the claims by the current amendment. The attached pages are captioned "Version with markings to show changes mad."